

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Yuzuru Morita, 66, retired Irrigation Superintendent for Oahu Sugar Company

Yuzuru Morita, Japanese, was born May 8, 1917, in Kaumana, Big Island. His father, from Kumamoto-ken, Japan, came to Hawaii and worked on Parker Ranch. When Yuzuru was six years old, the family moved to Waipahu, where his father worked as a stonecutter for Oahu Sugar Company.

In 1933, after completing the ninth grade, Yuzuru began working for Oahu Sugar first as a cane cutter and then as an irrigation contractor. During this time, he attended Waipahu Continuation School, eventually earning his high school certificate. In 1939, he was promoted to irrigation supervisor.

During World War II, Yuzuru was a member of the famous 442nd regimental combat team.

Yuzuru returned to Oahu Sugar after the war and continued as an irrigation supervisor. His responsibilities continued to increase and, in 1975, he was named Irrigation Superintendent for the entire Waipahu and Ewa Plantations.

Yuzuru retired from Oahu Sugar in 1982, after almost fifty years of service. He lives in Aiea with his wife Misuye. They have six children and four grandchildren.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Yuzuru Morita (YM)

June 2, 1983

Aiea, Oahu

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Yuzuru Morita. Today is June 2, 1983, and we're at his home in Aiea, Oahu, Hawaii.

Okay, Mr. Morita, can you tell me first where you were born and when you were born?

YM: Right. I was born in Kaumana, Hilo, May the eighth, 1917.

WN: What was your dad doing in Kaumana?

YM: My dad had a small ranch. And he worked for Parker Ranch on a part-time basis when they needed fence repair and stuff like that. And he worked with---his partner was a Portuguese guy.

WN: Did he get wages or was he his own independent rancher?

YM: He was a independent rancher. And whenever he worked for Parker Ranch, they give him. I don't know how much he got but he received some compensation.

WN: I know it was a long way back, but do you remember your house over there or what you lived in?

YM: Yeah, it was uh...a shack, yeah, more or less because he was just starting out, you know. We had some Japanese neighbors and Portuguese neighbors. And because of that I got along pretty well with the Portuguese, you know.

WN: Is it mostly Portuguese or mostly Japanese?

YM: Mostly Japanese. Mostly Japanese. Portuguese mix between, in between. I remember there quite a few Portuguese in Hilo at that time.

WN: Do you remember---did your father tell you any stories about why he came to Hawaii?

YM: The reason was he was from a farming background and they had quite a few timberland, you know. And they decided to go into lumbering. That's when it failed and he was forced to come to---he decided he wanted to continue his education. His older brother is a graduate engineer. And he worked in the early days for the Manchurian Railroad. My dad was a pre-med student at that time. And when they lost their holdings in the old country, he decide he come to Hawaii. And he heard lot of people made money, so he wanted to come and sort of replenish some of the [money]---make enough money so he can continue finish up his schooling in the medical field. He worked in the various tunnels being built--water tunnel, you know--being built at that time. And he did make his pile. And he was waiting for transportation back to Japan to continue his schooling.

In the meantime, one of his fellow countrymen had a homestead and he was just building and he needed a good access road over the lava rocks and stuff like that. So he [YM's father]---because of his experience with powder, he offered to give him a hand. Then he got involved in an accident because of the condition of the powder and probably was old stuff. He gave 'em enough time for the fuse to go, but it didn't. So when he went back to check, that's when it exploded and he was critically injured---his head, shoulders and loss of the use of his right thumb. Consequently, the homesteader just starting didn't have enough money to pay for his medical needs, so my dad used up all his savings. That was end of his ambition to continue his education in the medical field. Consequently, in the meantime, met my mother, got married and started a family.

WN: Where was your father from in Japan?

YM: Kumamoto [-ken].

WN: Being a pre-med student at Kumamoto, was that pretty unusual?

YM: It's very unusual. In fact, my wife, my brother and I visited the old---his birthplace. And look at what used to be our dad's holdings, which was quite extensive. And it was verified by the people that were living in that small town. What my dad used to tell me, I was very skeptical, but after visiting and heard the old people that knew the family, they

substantiated---they verified that all that my dad told me was true.

WN: You happen to know what his parents were doing in Kumamoto?

YM: Well, they were farmers, eh. But they were all gone by the time my wife and my brother visited them. Had nobody there except---the town people said there were one uncle that were related to my dad. Was living in another town but they were having a hard time contacting him, and he was sickly too, and we were not able to meet him. Wanted very much to meet him but we found that there were nobody beside that fella that we missed living nearby, or that any one of them knew, you know, that were alive and were related to the Morita family.

WN: And what was your mother---where was she from?

YM: My mother is a nisei, Hawaiian-born. She was born on the Big Island, I forgot what town but along the Hamakua Coast someplace.

WN: So she spoke English?

YM: Yes, she was fortunate to finish the fourth grade. She was the oldest of a family of four boys and three girls. She had to leave school during the fourth year because of the death of her mother, she died giving birth to a child. So she [YM's mother] more or less took care of the balance of the family, the brothers and sisters, with my grandfather who never did remarry.

WN: What was her maiden name?

YM: Nobue Goto.

WN: When your father was working at Parker Ranch, was she doing any work?

YM: She was busy raising a family.

(Laughter)

WN: I guess that's a full time job, too.

YM: Right. I come from a family of five boys and three girls, you know. Although at that time she's just beginning a family. Ended up with eight children.

WN: So, in 1924, when you were six years old, you folks all moved to Waipahu. Do you know why he---your father had to move to Waipahu?

YM: Well, my dad bought some cane land in Kapoho and he tried a venture in growing sugarcane. He bought it at a high price when sugar prices were okay, high. Then subsequent years, the price of sugar dropped and we lost everything.

WN: He was independent cane?

YM: Independent cane grower.

WN: So you folks made the move to Waipahu.

YM: Come to Waipahu and we were able to pay back whatever he owed at that time.

WN: When he came to Waipahu, did he come as independent contractor or did he work for Oahu Sugar?

YM: He worked for Oahu Sugar as a stonemason, stonecutter. Cutting that boulders into more or less a rectangle block, about three or four inches thick. And roughly about one foot by foot and a half. These blocks were used primarily for lining ditches--irrigation ditches. Primarily for lining ditches because there were a lot of them around. And it was good material for lining ditches. They also use...

WN: Do they still do that today?

YM: No! No, it's a lost art, I think. It went with the last of the isseis that were here.

WN: How did he cut stone? Or what tools did he used or...

YM: Chisel, wedges, and sledgehammer. And lot of hard work. (Laughs) They chisel out the wedges. Strategic uh---they seem to know how to read the grains on these great big boulders and they knew exactly where to split it. And they came out fairly---it came out accurate. So that in time they were so accurate that very few wasted. They were so skilled that the wastage was minimized. Then again, there were not only Japanese but there were Portuguese [who] were also good stonecutters.

WN: Did they use any kind stone or certain kind?

YM: Uh, no specific---I think they used that basalt. Commonly called a bluestone (bluerock).

WN: Was it his job to go and get the stones, too?

YM: No, the stones were usually unearthed by the plowing operations, at that time they probably used mules and steamrollers, you know, to get it to the surface. And then I recollect my dad on a great big boulder with his small hammer and chisel. Lining up the wedges, you know, so he can break them in the desired size.

WN: Did you help him out at all?

YM: I tried to learn the technique but his comment was, "There's no need for more (than one) crazy people in the family. Just one crazy guy enough, you know." It was hard work. I did some and he never did teach me but later on, after my dad was dead and I owned my own home, and there were some boulders there. So I tried asking some people that knew how to do it. And I tried it and I had some success breaking the boulders, you know. But not into the size that---the finished product that they used to line the ditches.

WN: How many did he make in one day?

YM: Shee, I don't remember but he was saying something about being able---they were paid ten cents a piece, one block. They were paid on a contract base. I don't recall how many but I would imagine---he was saying something about three dollars a day.

WN: That's about thirty [blocks] then?

YM: Yeah.

WN: Three dollars a day seems like more than what the field workers were getting.

YM: Oh yeah! Oh yeah. That was later---not at the beginning. When the first people did the stonecutting, I'm sure they were paid less. But I recall it was late in 19..., oh, right around in 1930, I imagine. So 1930, '33, during that time it was two and a half [\$2.50], three dollars was about the prevailing rate. Cane cutters were---they were making between two and a half [\$2.50] to maybe five dollars a day.

WN: This is day wages?

YM: A contract, you know, contract. They were making somewhere range between two and a half [\$2.50] to about five dollars a day.

WN: So what was it like for you growing up in Waipahu?

YM: There weren't too many things that we could do. But Waipahu at that time had lot of rice fields. And their ditches---their waterways were filled with all kinds of fish, goldfish, serpent's head, 'o'opu, freshwater eel, frogs. We spent our Saturdays and Sundays trying to catch them. If we had enough, we used to take them to the Chinese camp, or the Filipino camp and sold whatever we caught. The best was catfish and bullfrog. We get paid anywhere from a dollar to about three dollars a bucketful, you know. And with that we used to go to the theater. And we take along the neighborhood kids. And whole gang of us will be going to the theater and munching on crack seed, you know. Five cents package of crack seed and we had all kinds of fun. Also we used to---whenever there's mountain apple season, we used to walk from Waipahu to up into the Koolaus to pick mountain apples and liliko'is, lili-wai. We had one great time doing those things. That was about it, that's about all we could do.

WN: Any kind of organized activities?

YM: Not while we were growing up, you know. But from after mid-thirties [mid-1930s], community program was set up, you know. Softball, volleyball, tennis, basketball, what have you. Then their attention was more toward playing baseball. Waipahu was a great baseball town. Also lucky we had a manager who was very much interested in the welfare of the young kids and the civilian population. [For] the employees on the plantation, he readily set aside money and backing so that we got started in all kinds of athletic endeavors. And all you have to do is refer back to some of the old newspaper clippings. And Waipahu was really a big---a great sports town because of the interest that Mr. Hans L'Orange have put in. And we were lucky, too, we had people in the community, Kam [Kamehameha] School graduates, that used to be the background [i.e. descendants] of foreman, luna, so-called luna bracket that were willing to come out and share some of their experiences and coach the different teams and manage the different sports organization that made possible the high standard athletic program that was carried out in Waipahu.

WN: So would you say the---Mr. L'Orange was mostly responsible for Waipahu having such a strong sports reputation?

YM: Definitely! Because without playground and funds and backing interest, no way would any sports program or anything will succeed without the help of someone.

- WN: And prior to Mr. L'Orange coming in as a manager of Waipahu, there wasn't this organization?
- YM: There were but most of the people were busy trying to make a living. (Between 1930 and 1941) baseball and barefoot football was about the thing.
- WN: You mentioned earlier that you used to go sell bullfrogs? What did---who bought the bullfrogs?
- YM: Primarily, Chinese. It seems like it was a delicacy. Also the waters around Pearl Harbor were teeming with 'ōpae, and Chinese like the 'ōpae. Also in addition to 'ōpae there were a lot of clams. We used to go out digging for clams, too. No problem, like a bucketful, we can pick 'em up in no time. Not anymore. (Laughs) They all gone.
- WN: You had to get it certain time of the year or you could go anytime?
- YM: No, September was set aside as---I think it was September, October, November, I think. Even at that time, there was a kāpu, eh, you know. A period where---a conservation, you know, to perpetuate the number of clams, I guess. The 'ōpae was all year. They were both freshwater and saltwater. The rivers were teeming with the freshwater shrimps, yeah.
- WN: What else did you folks sell to make money? I know earlier you told me you folks sold kiawe beans.
- YM: Oh, that was during summer work. We used to get paid ten cents a bag.
- WN: By who?
- YM: Oahu Sugar. I guess even at that time, they were trying to keep kids busy so that juvenile delinquency will be at the minimum, eh.
- (Laughter)
- WN: What did Oahu Sugar use the beans for?
- YM: Oh, they used to feed them to the mules because the beasts of burden at that time in early---prior to the middle 1935 was the mule. They used to pull the cane cars, loaded with cane to and from the sugar mill to be processed.
- WN: You said you used to go the Chinese camp to sell? These were the Chinese that working in the cane fields?

YM: Yes, I remember, there were a gang of Chinese, cane cutters. Then later on, they got fewer and fewer and the only Chinese working for Oahu Sugar when I started working was in the mill or in the pump department, you know. Out in the field like doing agriculture work, they were all out by that time. Or they left the plantation and they went into business of their own.

WN: And I also heard there were a lot of farms, rice farms around owned by Chinese?

YM: They were the major ones that own the farms--the rice farms. The Japanese had watercress and a few taro patches and stuff like that. But most of the rice fields were owned by the Chinese and gradually a few Japanese got in on it just prior to Waipahu going out of rice production.

WN: And who owned the land that the rice fields were on?

YM: Probably leaseholds. I imagine Campbell was one of the big owners around Waipahu.

WN: The land that Oahu Sugar was on was owned by Campbell?

YM: Campbell, Robinson, Queen's Hospital and Bishop Estate. Those were the big landowners. Waipahu itself---Oahu Sugar itself probably own about a 1,000 acres out of maybe 20,000 acres that were cultivated.

WN: And did you work in the cane fields?

YM: I worked as soon as I finished school which was in 1933. I started working for Oahu Sugar Company. And I started cutting cane, I found that it was a---tiresome job. And then decided to go into irrigation contract which was next to owning your own land to go into farming on your own. You made a contract with a group of people averaging about ten to fifteen acres. And we get paid by the ton that we produced. And sugarcane takes an average of between twenty-three and twenty-four months for maturity. When the cane is harvested, they're weighed and we get paid so much a ton.

WN: This is kompang work, yeah?

YM: That's right. At that time, commonly, you know, they used to call 'em kompang.

WN: Did you folks join as a group?

YM: Yeah. Usually it's anywhere from say between four, five people to maybe fifteen people, depend on the size of the field. An average of about---per man average can handle about ten to fifteen acres. And they usually have, what they call, contract boss. He's the one that reports the time in and we get our share for number of workdays that we spent. And divide, what they call it, kompany money. The big money which usually runs anywhere from about \$500 to \$1500, which was big money at that time.

WN: How come had such a wide range of difference?

YM: Well, depends on number of acres that you handle per man. And how many tons of cane you get out of an acre. At that time was---wasn't uncommon for a field producing 125 tons, 130 tons. So you get your range between maybe 75 tons to about 130, 140 tons cane per acre.

WN: You would get a lump sum at the end of the twenty-three months?

YM: That's right.

WN: How did you live in between that time? Did you get money in between?

YM: Right. The company used to pay us a dollar a day for ten-hour work.

WN: And then when you got your lump sum, did you have to pay it back?

YM: That's right, we pay all that back. Plus if we get outside help to weed the field, we have to pay them. And if we have outside people coming in fertilize your field, we have to pay them.

WN: I see. But they weren't part of the kompany?

YM: No, no, no. And whatever money was left was divided among the group.

WN: So what other expenses were needed during the twenty-three months? How about equipment, how did you get your equipment?

YM: Equipment was just your hoe and that was provided by the company. File, you have to buy your own. Gloves were luxury, which we couldn't afford, you know, 'cause dollar a day. We can't buy gloves that cost---at that

time probably was costing about dollar and a quarter [\$1.25] per pair of leather gloves, eh. So our parents used to make what they called teori. It's a cloth--denim clothed covering to protect your outer---it's bare in here [palm]. It's just an outer covering and a cord, where you slip your hand in. And you have a protection on the outside.

WN: The palms are bare?

YM: Yeah, the palms are bare. That help, you know, because cane has fuzz. Cane leaf has fuzz on the sheath, the leaf sheath. You have fuzz on them and that caused infection and had lot of scars that I have now. Hard to see now but...

WN: From the cane, yeah?

YM: ...for lancing, get boils caused from the cane fuzz. And go the doctor and the doctor just lanced it.

WN: What about the harvesting the cane, did you have to do that too?

YM: No, harvesting was done by a gang. And they were paid---also be paid by the company by the ton.

WN: So you cultivated all the way up until the time to cut the cane...

YM: That's right.

WN: ...contract with the gang?

YM: That's right, yeah.

WN: I see. And your kompany gang, did you know everybody? Was it like a bunch of friends who did it, got together?

YM: Oh yes! We're always looking forward toward the---what we call---final settlement when your field is harvested. And we have the lump sum settlement coming, we never failed to have several get-together parties. At that time, it was big deal, eh, you know. A few beers, a gallon or two of sake, homemade sake.
(Laughs)

WN: Made by who?

YM: Well, homemade, you know. Get the people that knew how to make them. Because they went through a period of

prohibition. So lot of the people knew how to make sake and what we used to call rotgut beer. They did make beer too.

WN: 'Okolehao too?

YM: 'Okolehao somehow, they---some of them managed to buy them from some people that knew how to make them.

WN: So after you folks got the cane harvested, and then you guys got paid and everything, right away you started again on your next harvest?

YM: You know what, the company will send equipment to plow the field, or replant the field, or what we call ratoon the field, you know. Usually, from the initial planting, you get maybe three (to four) crops. Plant, first ratoon, second ratoon, third ratoon. Then you replot again and you plant them with different variety again because you---even at that time the same variety won't produce the maximum yield from an acre of land. Somehow, they deteriorate. They never get the maximum yield if they plant the same variety. That's why we have the HSPA [Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association] which will continually look for varieties to replace the old variety. So we get a maximum yield from every cane and acre of land.

WN: Also, did you folks have any problems with anybody in your kompany gang not doing the same amount of work as the others, any kind of problems like that?

YM: Like any place of occupation, you do have. Not all of them are hard workers, we do have some of them goof off. Like in army, (laughs) you have those gold bricks, eh. You do have but, some of them during the course, find that the work is too hard and uncomfortable, they leave. We normally pick up where they left off. [For the] effort we get that much more per---our share will increase because we did little bit more.

WN: So the success of the kompany depends on all the workers doing...

YM: That's right.

WN: ...working hard?

YM: Working together, you know. I tell you, it wasn't easy. Because rubber boots at that time was unheard of, and we worked in water a good part of the time, and

we susceptible to all kinds of skin disorder because we working in water. Many times we worked barefoot because we can't wear anything, you know if you have a shoe on, it aggravate the itch, or whatever, infection that we have. Working barefoot a good part of the time was not uncommon. Fortunately, that time, discarded bottles---very few ended up in the field. People I guess were more responsible, eh.

WN: Not as dangerous, then?

YM: Yeah, yeah.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: What was your schooling in Waipahu?

YM: During my time, late 1920s and early 1930s, because of the large number in the family--the number of kids in the family and one parent, most of them was one parent working--the mother have to stay home and bring up the children--young children. So dad was the only one that worked. So only one breadwinner. So naturally, they---you lucky if you were able to go finish eighth grade. And the parents were waiting for you to graduate, you know the eighth grade. And then you start working to help the family income. I was lucky to go one extra year, ninth grade. Because in my eighth year, they started a Smith-Hughes program, which is known today as FFA, Future Farmers of America. And it was a two-year program and they promised at that time that they will start the ninth year at Waipahu. So I was lucky I went to ninth grade. The others more affluent or family that can afford them, they used to send their children to Kalakaua Intermediate to finish their intermediate. And go on to McKinley High School which very few of them were able to afford to go to high school.

WN: And what school did you go to in Waipahu?

YM: The Waipahu Elementary School. Then when I finished my ninth grade, I started working for Oahu Sugar Company. We had like an adult education program which is depending on how much you want to do and how much time you have to complete your educational endeavors which was a high school certificate. And I was lucky by going about five years and I've earned my high school

certificate by going to what they call Waipahu Continuation School. The company used to send---allow us to go to school half a day a week. And uh...

WN: On company time?

YM: On company time. From the different department. Some department go from Monday, other department to Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. I was in the irrigation department, usually we used to go during Wednesdays. There were also night classes that was available Monday to Friday, two hours, from 7 o'clock to 9 o'clock. You can take whatever subject that you were interested in and worked toward making enough credits for your high school certificate. I would like to mention Mr. Charles W. Isle, which many of us will never forget; his untiring effort to try and get us to further our education, otherwise we would never attain some of our goals that we had in mind.

WN: And this Mr. Isle, what was his position?

YM: He was the principal and he used to handle the classrooms with the aid of maybe two or three teachers in training from the Department of Education. The fifth-year students, you know from the University of Hawaii, they used to come out and handle some of the classes. Usually, there were maybe two or three teachers in training that used to come out and help out, but the bulk of the work was done by Mr. Charles Isle.

WN: What year did you finish this uh...?

YM: I finished in 1939. I started in around 1933, late in 1933.

WN: All this time you were in irrigation?

YM: In irrigation.

WN: The kompang...

YM: Yeah. Right. And in 1939, I became like---they gave me chance to be a supervisor. In the meantime, I used to---extracurricular activity like being a assistant scoutmaster for the continuation school. Waipahu Continuation School was sponsoring one troop, one Boy Scout troop. That's the reason why I became assistant scoutmaster for a group of kids that were interested in Boy Scout work. While attending this school, I was given an opportunity to manage some

community basketball leagues, volleyball leagues, softball leagues, tennis and etc. So I was exposed to quite a bit of athletic activities. And in 1939, because of all that background, I was offered to be a luna, water luna.

WN: This was to be a luna for one kompang gang or for...?

YM: For a section, an irrigation section.

WN: How many gangs comprised one section?

YM: Oh, it [one section] could be anywhere from five to maybe ten fields.

WN: And you being luna, was that unusual for a Japanese at that time or were there other Japanese already?

YM: There were some Japanese in that capacity. In fact, Waipahu I think the majority---like I say---over half was Japanese, Isseis. And there were a few Hawaiians, Portuguese, no Filipinos as yet, when I started, and one Chinese. It was a mixed group, but like I mentioned previously, they were bringing in a lot of Kam [Kamehameha] School graduates trying to give the Hawaiians a chance for assume leadership positions. A few of them have stayed until they retire. Quite a few of them left the plantation for greener pastures so they...(Laughs)

WN: You were named irrigation supervisor in 1939. That was after you got your high school diploma then?

YM: Right, yeah.

WN: What would you say would be the main reason why you were selected to be supervisor, was it the high school diploma, anything else that you may have had?

YM: I mentioned my experience that I received from Boy Scouts assistant scoutmaster, managing different community leagues, athletic leagues. Maybe they felt that I might be able to handle that kind---the work that involved in irrigation. Because I was in irrigation, probably they figured I can do it with that background. I was only happy to be given that opportunity to try out my experience, see how far I can get.

WN: And what were your responsibilities as...?

YM: Taking care of about a thousand acres of cane land, divided up in different fields, called the irrigation section.

WN: You had to go around to each of the fields, how did you get around?

YM: Used to get around on horseback and later on I was able to afford a bicycle and I used to go around on a bicycle also. I used to keep the time and watch the quality of work---irrigating, weeding, fertilizing, etc. Supervising all phases of the---what they call the kompang work, which is cultivating the sugarcane for two years.

WN: And did you get paid a set salary?

YM: Yeah. We were paid a set salary. I started out with seventy-five dollars a month which was big money at that time. (Laughs)

WN: That's still more than kompang work though, eh, seventy-five dollars...

YM: Yeah, at that time seventy-five dollars I used to go a long way. The thing is---I recall as I was going to school just about time the Japanese-language school was over--and I used to live next to the railroad track and the road runs along nearby also. And just about time that Japanese-language school is pau, I used to see this Japanese fellow on a white horse. Riding very sedately, looking proud, you know. And I guess I made up my mind at that time, "Gee, that pretty good job."

(Laughter)

And you know, when I applied for the irrigation contract work, kompang work, when I started working for Oahu Sugar Company, this same fella that I used to see riding this white horse and looking proudly on the horse, he became my luna. He taught me--this (Mr.) Ichiyama is deceased now--but he taught me all phases of the irrigation contract work. He had the patience to teach me all what he knew and I owe him a lot. Once in a while I think about him among the many people that helped me get to the position that I ended up.

WN: So how did you feel being a supervisor instead of being one of the people being supervised?

YM: Well...

WN: Big difference?

YM: This is the way it happened. One day, my irrigation superintendent told me, "Yuzuru, Mr. Tester would like to see you." He was the assistant manager for Oahu Sugar Company. He was a [Boy] Scout executive so I knew him. Familiar because of my [Boy] Scout work.

And I asked him, "Mr. Scott," he's my irrigation superintendent, "why he wanna see me for?"

"Oh, he said he'll let you know when you see him this afternoon."

So after work I went to the office and greeted Mr. Tester. The first thing that he asked me was, "Yuzuru, you know how to ride horse?" (Laughs)

I don't know what made me give him this answer, "Gee, I can learn."

And he told me, "Tomorrow morning, you report to the stable. And they'll have a horse ready for you. You go down to the Peninsula area, there's a camp there, you know where it is, Camp 32. Mr. Crawford will be your new irrigation superintendent. He'll be waiting for you and he'll give you the lowdown what to do. You report to him tomorrow morning."

And I did report to the stable and they had a horse ready for me. I went on down saw Mr. Crawford and Mr. Crawford, I know him because we played tennis together on many occasions. So I knew him, this is what he says, "Yuzuru, this is the time book. This is the irrigation book. And this is the rainfall book. Good luck."

Shook my hand and send me on my way. That was my introduction to be a supervisor--irrigation supervisor. Fortunately, after the first day--my first day of work, I saw my old irrigation luna and asked him what need to be done. So he gave me all the lowdown on how to keep the time, the rain book and the round book. I owe a lot to him.

WN: What was the rain book?

YM: This is to record the rainfall. We had rain gauges for different portions of our field. Strategic area we do have rain gauge. And we were required to measure---keep a record of them. So we do have a very

accurate recording of the rainfall throughout Oahu Sugar Company. I'm sure they're still continuing the same program. That's to conserve irrigation water too. If we have enough water, we don't need to irrigate.

WN: That---your kompany gang, the one that you worked with, how did they feel that now that you're a luna?

YM: Well, going back to my first encounter with Mr. Tester at the office. A twenty-one-year-old kid, happy like hell after being told that he's going to be a supervisor. I went home and I saw my dad and I told my dad, "Eh, dad, I'm gonna be luna from tomorrow."

My dad just made only one comment, this is what he said, (pause) "Don't forget that you was an irrigator."

For several days I pondered what he meant. Then it dawned on me. So I confronted my dad and, "Eh, dad you mean to tell me that for me to not to be uppertish, you know, stick my nose too high that you one supervisor."

"Exactly. If you do that, your trouble will begin from that moment on."

To my last day as an employee of Oahu Sugar Company prior to my retirement, I never forgot that word of wisdom that my dad had impounded on me that many, many years ago. I have made it one of my philosophies of life both at work and raising my own family in that philosophy.

WN: Seems like a good philosophy. (Laughs)

YM: I was lucky though, you know. One other thing that my continuation school teacher, Mr. Isle told me, one of the things that---I got to be pretty close with him. I used to---he taught me how to drive his car which is a big deal at that time, knowing how to drive car. He offered his car, the use of his car for me anytime.

WN: This is when you're going school?

YM: Yeah. He tried to test me out in different aspect---different feeling of the local people, the ethnic background. We had lot of arguments. I am just hardheaded as the next guy. In fact, I quit on him. I quit the adult education classes one time. I went home and told my mother, "I quit. I'm not going to school no more. The teacher give me too bad time."

My mother, a wise woman (laughs) like she was, told me, "I think you better think it over and I think you better apologize and go back to school."

I was hardheaded. Two, three days I thought about it. But finally (laughs) my mother was right. I made up my mind, I better go back and apologize. And if he would accept me back in school and I---fortunate for me, he accepted to take me back. From then on, I learned to respect him. He started giving me some of---sharing some of his thinking, like one of them that I'll never forget is, "Yuzuru, aim high. Set your goal high and work toward it." I think it was darn good advice. During the course of my service for Oahu Sugar Company, I took in lot of courses, and sure enough that saying "Aim high, set your goal high" still the same good old---good advice that they trying to instill among the people like in leadership, management bracket.

WN: So you were a manager---supervisor from '39...

YM: '39 on until...

WN: ...the war [World War II], excuse me, the war started, yeah?

YM: Yeah.

WN: What were you doing just before the war began in '41?

YM: I was uh---had a section of my own, you know, irrigation section. The assistant manager asked me if I wanted a deferment. You know when my draft number came up, "No, I'll serve my country. I would like to serve my country and I don't want to be branded as a draft dodger." So I stayed in for five years during the Second World War.

WN: Did they give a lot of others draft deferments?

YM: There were a few because---they had legitimate hardships. Some of them were hardship cases and some of them were positions where---responsible positions that the company would be in a bad way if they were drafted.

WN: So when you were drafted, who took your place?

YM: There's an old Puerto Rican fella, he's deceased now, Mr. Santiago, he took my place. I was lucky. I was in the Artillery Branch of the 442nd Combat Team which was the 522nd Field Artillery, Baker Battery. We served

overseas during the European campaign. We started from Italy, France, and ended the war in Germany, south of Munich, 1945.

WN: I thought the 442 was all voluntary, how did that come about?

YM: Yes, it was volunteer. Like I mentioned, I was drafted in '41. Then come 1943, the 442nd Combat Team was being organized and they asked for volunteers. They were few hundred of us that were drafted, volunteered to go with the 442nd Combat Team.

WN: So your first stop was Italy?

YM: Italy, yeah. The Anzio battle was over. That involved the 100th Infantry. We joined the Italian campaign north of Rome. (Pause) And from north of Rome we advanced to Leghorn. We had a stalemate there. And the invasion of Europe--southern Europe and the western Europe--France was started and we joined the southern advance from Marseille on up to the Verges Mountain. That's where the combat team suffered heavy casualty. And we were sent down to southern France to hold the sector until we were ready to go to make our final push into Germany. From southern France, the infantry went back to Italy. The artillery portion were ordered north to join the rest of the invading army to make the final assault into Germany. And like I mentioned, finished the war in south of Munich in 1945.

WN: When you came back, did you go back to that same job?

YM: Yeah, they gave me the same job back. The old fella was still there so they transferred me to another section. From there on, I started where I left off.

WN: As irrigation supervisor?

YM: Right.

WN: And in 1946, you got married, yeah?

YM: Yeah, 1946 I got married.

WN: How did you meet your wife?

YM: Well, I've known my wife for---while I was attending the continuation school. When I was in Italy, I received a letter from her stating her intention. Well, I always had her in mind and so I wrote back and tell, "Well if I'm lucky enough, when I come back, if

you'll have me, I wanna marry you." (Laughs) So it was when I got my discharge from the Army. I had two choices, either go to school or get married. So I chose to get married.

WN: You mean school would mean college?

YM: College, yeah. And I chose to get married. That which...

WN: Why was it one or the other?

YM: Still I was the oldest of a family of eight children. The younger ones were still going to school--high school. So my parents couldn't send me to school. We were---my brother and I, there were three of us in 442nd Combat Team. And we were sending money home---allotments, you know, to help pay the expenses for the rest of the family. Because of that they were able to finish their high schools. One was able to go through St. Louis College from grade school, you know. And he was lucky. When I came back, when I told my parents of intent to get married, if they had any money, you know. (Laughs) How can they? The youngest sister, they send her through Maryknoll and piano lessons, and what have you. And the youngest brother, he went through St. Louis, violin lessons, etc. No more money left. So that's why I had to---when I made my decision to get married, I couldn't get married right off, so I had to wait till October till I get enough money to pay for my wedding ring. (Laughs) So I had to postpone my wedding until October, 1946.

WN: And that was during the first sugar strike?

YM: That's right.

WN: What happened during the strike? You were telling me a story the last time?

YM: Well, because it was during the strike and everybody were getting rough time. The things that they do, or they did, may not necessarily be the things that they had in mind. Because they were told by other people, their leaders, that some of the things they did was not according to the good book. But I take it as good experience as people under stress can do lot of things that they normally don't do.

WN: So you were part of the management, right, at the time of the strike?

YM: That's right. During that time they tried their best to form a supervisors' union, but under the law, they [supervisors] don't have to belong to it. Because you were a part of management. We were protected by law. So there were no need for any individual in the supervisor's bracket to join the union. Maybe a good idea, but the company has it's own philosophies. And lot of the things are confidential. They cannot wantonly give out those information which is necessary for the success of the operation of the company, especially financial.

WN: Did you feel any pressure that you were Japanese or you were...

YM: Yeah, like...

WN: ...in a management position?

YM: Yeah, like I mentioned like during those adverse times like a strike, people will say, people will do things that are not kosher. So it's not their true feelings, some of the things that they did, I take it as a good experience and I myself will try to refrain from saying or doing things that are not right. We are protected by the law of the land. And moral obligations that we have to one another. After all, whether you are management or rank and file, you still going work for the same cause. Whatever success that the company is trying to attain, it's through their representative which is supervisors. And the work being done by the rank and file. We all responsible to the company that offering the opportunity for employment. Because that's to me, see, the American way. Fair play. (Pause) The fair play to me is immortal, you know, it's the only way. Although some people don't think so, some times, you know depends on the circumstances. All during the period, the togetherness that was shared by my parents, my brothers and sisters, and a lot of the people that I knew had helped gear or steer me throughout the strike, pre-strike, and post-strike. I've many good friends in the rank and file, very sympathetic to what I've gone through. So it pays off. (Laughs)

WN: And when you got married, you got married during the strike, yeah?

YM: Right.

WN: That caused any hardships for you folks?

- YM: Yeah, there were but I guess, like I previously mentioned people would do and say things that are not kosher. (Laughs)
- WN: And then so after the strike, you folks moved to Aiea, in '48?
- YM: That's right. In '48, we moved to Aiea and we met many, many good people in Aiea. There were really good workers, good people.
- WN: Why did you move to Aiea?
- YM: There was a fella that was suffering from cancer. So I was asked to take his place and try to get the yield up in the Aiea section and through the people that I worked with at Aiea were able to do so after few years. We got maximum yield from raising sugarcane in Aiea section.
- WN: The reason why you moved was because Oahu Sugar purchased...
- YM: Acquired, yeah.
- WN: ...acquired Aiea in '47?
- YM: Forty-seven, yeah. Honolulu plantation, Aiea plantation lost so many cane land down the airport area and around Pearl Harbor that it was uneconomical to grow sugarcane. So Oahu Sugar acquired additional acres.
- WN: Previously was owned by who?
- YM: Honolulu Plantation.
- WN: Oh, Honolulu Plantation. And what company owned Honolulu Plantation?
- YM: Gee, I forgot. I forgot who owned uh---something that uh...
- WN: Not AmFac [American Factors]?
- YM: No, it wasn't AmFac.
- WN: So you moved to this area, you also moved into this house?
- YM: That's right. So I'm living in Aiea longer than I lived in Waipahu. (Laughs)

WN: How did you feel about leaving Waipahu for Aiea?

YM: Well, some of my dad's feeling, he always used to say, "Go East. Go East," you know. "Go toward the sun."

(Laughter)

Only natural, eh, you know. So, go East, so I went East. I thought you know it's hard work but because I had that opportunity to show what can be done, maybe that contributed toward the opportunities that were open for me later on in my employment for Oahu Sugar Company.

WN: What was your position here in Aiea?

YM: Was section luna, water luna.

WN: Is that different from what you were doing just after the war?

YM: Right. At that time was only a small, one small section.

WN: And in Aiea, it was...

YM: They was divided into one, two, three sections. Mine was further east and then (there) was a middle section and there was the west section.

WN: And you oversaw all the kompang gangs?

YM: Right. Exactly, all phases of the cultivation of sugar cane, irrigating, fertilizing, weeding, etc.

WN: Do they still do kompang now, today?

YM: They do. They do. But they modified it, somewhat. We don't have to pay for weeding...

END OF SIDE TWO

SIDE ONE; TAPE NO. 10-4-1-83

WN: You were talking about the weeding. You didn't have to pay for the weeding.

YM: Yeah, they modified the contract, you know. You don't have to pay for the weeding that's done in the field. That was done by a gang hired by the company to do all

the weeding for the whole plantation. The weed control gang, they used to call 'em. So, the later years, it was only irrigating and just about it. Solely irrigating and fertilizing the field.

WN: Today is irrigating and fertilizing?

YM: Yeah, yeah. And the payment was modified. When your cane is harvested, you don't have to pay back the dollar a day that was paying us. Final big pay was just according to how much you get paid. They used to pay anywhere from \$1.25---when I started, it was \$1.25--to \$1.50 per ton of cane. But then when modification came, they took away weeding and you don't have to pay back---what we call---the dollar a day that we used to get. We don't have to pay that back. So they gave us flat day rate, per hour rate and you don't have to pay that. But they cut down the price per ton of cane. So it came down to anywhere from dollar to about dollar and a half per ton of cane at that time when I started. They dropped it down to anywhere from---depends on the system. The flat land, they call long line system, you know. They irrigate off ditches. Your lines start off from ditches, you see. Those were level places and they were paid somewhere in between eighteen cents to about twenty-three cents per ton.

WN: This is when?

YM: This is back around 1946, '47. They cut it down, okay. Then on the slopes, they have what they call the flume system. The section of cement flumes with openings where you can control the amount of water you can put in each line. They come in cement flumes so there won't be any erosion. Flat land you don't have to worry about erosion, right? But on fields that you have grade, you have chance of erosion. So they installed this cement, what they call herring bone flume system.

WN: Herring bone?

YM: Herring bone. Because you know herring bone is a fish. Your fish bone---the rib, yeah, then you have the bones extending out. It resembles that, that's why they call them herring bone. See, the water comes down the main rib, eh. And then he goes this way, see. So that's why...

WN: Outward?

YM: Outward, with adjustable slots. That they used to pay from nine cents to about fifteen cents per ton. Then later aluminum flume came in, you know, aluminum flume. Instead of water taking off from the side, aluminum flume, the water take off from the bottom. Then you have adjustable gates underneath, so you can control the amount of water to each line. That started from about nine cents too.

WN: Interesting they call it "flume" because when I think of "flume," I think of the old style flume where they used to throw the cane in...

YM: In---yeah to haul the---yeah, yeah. They used to use that on the Big Island.

WN: They didn't use it here at all?

YM: They did some, no? Very limited though here. Here was mostly train. A few places they did where the track, railroad track was kinda hard to get, you know. They used it. Very limited scale.

WN: Flumes, those flumes were what? Good for hilly areas?

YM: Hilly, hilly areas. So that you can control erosion eh, you see. That's why there was a difference between one dollar to dollar and a half [\$1.50] per ton, dropped down, you know, cause you don't have to pay the day rate. You don't have to worry about that. In the old system, the more guys that come in and do the work in your field, you have to pay those guys and you take what's left. (The old system per man handled) from ten to fifteen acres. (Under the new system) we were able to handle 50, 100, 150 acres (per man). Some of them got so proficient that (they) were able to handle about 300 acres one person. Instead of one person take care only ten acres.

You see how the advancement, development have improved the productivity. So they were able to keep up with the [pay] raises. But now it's coming to a point where your profit is diminishing. Your cost of material, cost of labor is going up now. Last year some plantation made some money, but most of plantation lost a few million dollars. They expect this year, most of them to break even or some of them make money this year, see. So that's why we're in a sad predicament today all over United States where your profit coming down, your cost of productivity is accelerating. Not only labor but cost of material, stuff like that going high. (Profits) going the other way, we'd like to get

the profit going up too, eh. Otherwise our economy gonna still suffer. And the feeling of productivity---American way, no way you gonna have this system work if you don't have increased productivity in line with increased pay. Not gonna work! And in Japan, in Germany, in Germany they beginning to feel the pains now. Japan gonna be feeling the pinch too pretty soon if productivity go down. Technology gotta improve, new varieties has to be produced so that we get more production out of an acre of land, eh.

WN: After the union came in, I would have imagined the labor cost went way up, yeah?

YM: It didn't go out of hand. It was still all right because at that time the productivity was going up too, see. But then productivity start going down because of...

WN: When did that happen?

YM: Oh, I'd say around 1970, late '60, 1970. Because the reasoning is I think timing. See, whatever endeavor you in, it should be that the longer you at it, your productivity or your intelligence should increase, eh? Okay. Through time. The guys that work uh---started working around 1930, mid-30s, they were beginning to retire. That's the guys that were involved in that efficiency uh...

WN: High productivity...

YM: Yeah, you know. I mean---and all this changes that were coming about, you know what I mean. They were beginning to retire. Okay, now. You ask one Hawaiian-born, you gonna work for sugar plantation, no way! Very few, they all was thinking about gee, they going to school and going to the Mainland or holding down an office job, being a lawyer or doctor or something like that, eh? No way, where you going get your labor? Hmm? Came from Philippines, eh? Okay, now, don't tell me the guys that come from the Philippines now in their early twenties or late in their twenties, their efficiency as a worker, more highly educated than the guys that first-generation Filipinos that came in earlier. But because of their experience they develop their skill, productivity increase. Now these guys that came in around late '60s and '70s, now you not going able to compare the productivity with the old-timers and the new timers. So your production going down, eh, the new guys. They taking the old-timers' place because they retired, retiring, age sixty-five.

Some took early retirement. So, the philosophy of the guys that came in early---late '20s, you know, and the Filipinos that came in the late '60s and early '70s, different. The guys that came in the late '20s, those guys were workers! They don't mind getting some sweat---getting their clothes wet or dirty from hard work. Not the guys that came in the late '60s and early '70s. Different. More educated, they exposed to American way. America, land of plenty, you don't have to work hard. You get paid because they get union and stuff like that. Consequently productivity goes down. Cost of labor going up, cost of material going up, declining profit. That's a predicament they are in now.

WN: So you think labor is the number one reason for decline of productivity today?

YM: Not only Hawaii! No get me wrong now. The entire United States too, including Europe now, in Germany. Germany, their productivity was going up and they were making recoveries so fast, like Germany and Japan. Just recently I read in the magazine that productivity in Germany is going down now. The employees are not that gung ho like they used to in the downfall World War II. Like same thing in Japan. Like if Japan don't watch out, they going be in the same category because they exposed to the American way, yeah.

WN: So you're saying American way is not necessarily good or bad or...?

YM: It is good. It's the people in it now that making it like that. Because they still think they can squeeze little bit more from management. Management have improved. There are some cases where manager weren't too hot, taking advantage of the poor employee. But you take the company even today, companies today now. Chrysler, for one, eh. Look, they change their philosophy now. They making money now. Couple of years ago they stay losing millions of dollars, but they back on their feet. And some of the airlines like that, that making good because they tighten their belt, more productivity, more efficiency and stuff like that, you know. Those are the things. Have to.

WN: So laborers is the main reason. Is there any other reasons for...?

YM: To me the people. On the sugar plantation, I'd say they must be same all over the State on the plantation. They must have gone through the same kind of

experience, yeah. The old-timers retire, the new guys come in, productivity drop. I understand now they beginning to come up. I owe everything that I got, what really success I enjoy to Oahu Sugar Company---the opportunities they gave me. So I tried my best to try and get these guys, you know, when this trend was---this is as early as 1971, when we took over Ewa plantation. Ewa went out, eh. So Ewa was one of the most efficient plantation, money-making plantation in the State. Why? Their productivity went down. They never did recover from that 1956 or 1958 strike that they went through. They never did recover. They used to outstrip---Oahu Sugar in productivity, yield per acre, per ton of sugar per acre. They were one of the top ones. I worked with them so I know.

WN: What happened with that '58 strike to make them not be...

YM: Oh, they had to---they lost big money. They never did recover. That's why they had to sell out to Waipahu. But anyway, it was either Waipahu or Ewa, you know. Two plantations could not survive.

WN: How did Waipahu survive?

YM: Well, we---our production were up. We were making money. Ewa wasn't making too much money.

WN: So you think it's differences in values of the younger people compared to the older ones?

YM: I think so. Now the philosophy is "No do too much. You going get paid." But like many other companies, they said they can't come to terms on new contract. So company say, okay, we quit, pau. Those guys no more work. You've heard companies going out of business because they can't make it, yeah. That's why I keep telling the guys in 1971, "Look, you guys, productivity gotta go. If you want your pay to get up, you gotta keep in line. New way of doing things. I don't mean---because you work---get 10 percent raise that you gotta [get]---100 percent increase in productivity. No! Least if you come up at least 10 percent, maybe not so bad. Your productivity increase, so cost of production going go down too, yeah. Theoretically, you'd be status quo, eh? But still the profit that you were making going be all right. Even the profit stay status quo, that's all right. Even you pay little bit more, because you get more productivity, your profit going remain the same, theoretically. Hard to convince 'em. Some of the supervisors too, you know what I

mean. Some of the supervisors feel they were overworked. This free country. If they think they were overworked and they underpaid, get out! Damn fool, going be working for a company you working like hell and you underpaid. Why go work for a company like that? Hmm? What do you think? Would you stay in a company where you underpaid?

WN: No.

YM: If get other places, you know.

WN: If get other places...

YM: Sure! Today most of the guys have gone through high school and many of the guys have come out from universities. With the education, they can do most anything if they want to, if they make up their mind. And it's available. The other guy say, "Oh, no more chance, no more chance!" That's a lot of hogwash. To me because they gave up or they weren't willing to go after it.

WN: So do you think this thing is gonna change? You think productivity will ever come back up again?

YM: Dunno. Anything can happen.

WN: If it doesn't happen, what do you see the future of sugar in Hawaii being?

YM: For the State's sake, I hate like hell to see sugar go out of production. When you look at the employment---capabilities, eh, no more. Like---sure they say tourism, yeah. Tourism going only be good as long as the economy stays up there. That's the first thing to go down if the economy start going the other way. What else---what other resources do we have? No more material. Agriculture, but only so much land can be going to agriculture. They can produce vegetables and stuff much cheaper on the Mainland and stuff like that and bring 'em in. Only advantage we have is fresh that's why, you know what I mean. And then it's oh locally grown. Ain't gonna be our salvation. If we able to produce agriculture products less than what they producing in the states or in any other country, then we'll be in compatible position where we can keep on going by exporting. But somewhere the thinking has to be changed. Can be done yet, can. Technology, yeah, there are ways of doing things.

WN: So there is a chance you think...

YM: Sure! I have great faith in the future.

WN: What does sugar mean to you?

YM: That sugar made Hawaii. Other people can say, "Oh my father never works plantation." Well right, yeah, what brought in the dollars? What brought in the dollars to make hotels and stuff like that? Sugar! Basically the Big Five like that. Okay. Then some of the other guys got in on the act, you know what I mean. They made money, okay. But the sugar brought in the money first. Not only sugar but pineapple and stuff like that. I tell you hard to replace though.

And technology---the kind stuff to me, scientific research and stuff like that going come up with things that we haven't ever dreamed that possible can derive from sugarcane or pineapple. Fuel shortage like that, sure, they talking about self-sufficiency like Brazil. Today, what? Today what 80 percent, 90 percent, the cars are being driven by--what they call that now--converting sugar into fuel. We haven't done that yet. Maybe we don't have to yet. Economy is such, the cost of oil and stuff like that have gone down instead of going up. So we in a better picture now. Solar and that kind of stuff yet. Maybe a lot of these things, technologically, we still can go far with sugar. It's not a lost cause yet! As long as the people don't---the people that invest in their money into sugar don't give up. If they give up, they pull their money out and invest them in something else, then sugar cannot survive. If it's State-run now---anything that's State-run or something like that is not going be as efficient if it's done by private endeavors. You can see that. You know you go too far, the guys that are working for City and County. Not all the guys, but lot of the guys. They playing the game. Get some good people in City and County and Federal (government). I still think they're many good people but they're plenty---the ones that are hanging on. Just milking, milking, you know. No give back.

WN: So, well, you worked your way up and then in 1975, you became irrigation superintendent for the entire Ewa and Waipahu plantations. And you told me earlier that you, "broke the color line." So how do you feel about your accomplishments?

YM: I feel this way, there were many people that were responsible that I met. The things that they told me, the things they did for me. The things that they did to help. Without their help, totally impossible for me

to get up. That's why that's the American way. You going get discrimination and stuff like that any place. Among your own kind you gonna have. Among your own family, brothers and sisters, you gonna have---like, one better than the other, you know. You gonna have that. But because if you have all the help of all the people, you gonna get up over there. You no can do anything by yourself. The very food that you eat, you cannot grow everything and survive by yourself. You going depend on some people. More so now. Maybe many, many, many years ago, the caveman days, maybe not so bad. You go out, you wanna eat, you go get a deer, a turkey, or what have you, a fowl, go to the beach, go fish like that, maybe. But not in these days and age, no. No more time to with all the responsibilities that we have. No time to do that. So we are dependent on other people. To me that's everything in a nutshell. Cause people were good to me, they gave me an opportunity to show my stuff. I don't feel proud that I broke the color line. I just lucky. They gave me an opportunity.

WN: Is there anything that you would have done differently in your life?

YM: Yeah, looking at it now. Had I known lot of the things that I know now, I'd probably won't do a lot of the things, you know. I'd probably do basically, like helping people and be good to people. And like count my blessings every morning, you know, to the Almighty. Because you need your help from somebody, you know. Be it Him, or my next door neighbor, or the people that I work with, I need their help. I need their goodwill. That's why coming back to what my father said, "No forget you was one hanawai man. The day you forget you was one hanawai man, that's---from then on, your troubles will begin." So I live with that philosophy, never forget, respect the hanawai man. It's hard work, messy work, uncomfortable, especially when we started out. Now not too bad, but still yet you have to irrigate, you have to get wet, you have to get.... Hot when the sun is out and it's wet when you---when it rains. In the morning, when you get heavy dew, you wet from the morning, uncomfortable. Sure, that nowadays, it helps. You have boots, you have raincoat. Not like before. Rain or shine, work is offered. Now, if it rains too heavy, enough during early part in the morning, in the evening or during the day, they blow the whistle, they send out word, through radio, what have you, communicate with the people that "no work tomorrow because we have enough rain or it's too messy for equipment to go into the fields" and stuff like that. They try to cut the expense.

WN: Well, so, Mr. Morita, in maybe twenty, thirty years, people gonna be listening or reading what---about your life and who knows, we don't know whether sugar is gonna be around or not. Do you have any---before I turn off the tape, do you have words of advice for the next generation or future generations of Hawaii?

YM: To me, the basic philosophy of life remains the same. You gotta go out and do it. You the main guy, you gotta do it. You gotta live your life courageously with humility and beauty, love, eh. Love thy fellow man. You have that, no different. No different from today, thirty, forty, fifty years from now, it's gonna be the same. Courage, you gotta have, gotta get humility, you gotta have beauty, in other words, love, yeah. Love your fellow men. Love what you're doing. Love your children. You the main guy, nobody else!

(With the advent of drip irrigation and new technologies, sugar production is improving. The future of sugar looks good.)

WN: Okay, well, thank you very much.

YM: Sure.

END OF INTERVIEW

FIVE LIFE HISTORIES

**ETHNIC STUDIES ORAL
HISTORY PROJECT
University of Hawaii-Manoa
June 1983**